

EXHIBIT 3

Vacationers at N.S. lodge must sign waivers

BY BILL POWER BUSINESS REPORTER

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Trout Point wants visitors to refrain from Internet reviews



Korine Schutter, a teacher from Midland, Mich., in the lounge area at Trout Point Lodge. The lodge requires visitors to sign a promise not to write web reviews. (Tim Krochak / Staff)

Stay at Trout Point Lodge in East Kemptville and you'll be asked to sign a legal agreement promising to refrain from posting reviews on sites like the TripAdvisor travel directory or vacation video on sites like YouTube.

"We're fed up with all the inaccuracies and defamatory comments on the site, with people who haven't stayed here commenting on the level of service and that sort of thing," innkeeper Charles Leary said Friday about a move he said directly targets TripAdvisor.

The little lodge has decided to take the unusual move of asking all guests to sign the anti-posting agreement that involves a range of social media.

"In the age of cellphone cameras and everyone having a video camera while on vacation, we want our guests to feel their seclusion, relaxation, and privacy will remain intact when they go to our wilderness retreat," said Leary.

TripAdvisor retaliated by allowing a person who did not stay at the lodge to give it the lowest rating possible for customer service, he said.

"A lot of innkeepers and restaurant operators are fed up with many obvious inaccuracies and defamatory comments on the site. We feel the best way to protect ourselves is to ask guests to sign the agreement."

In a David versus Goliath scenario, TripAdvisor, based in Newtown, Mass., recently published a red warning with an exclamation mark on the Trout Point Lodge page with an advisory:

"TripAdvisor has reasonable cause to believe that this property requires guests to agree not to post any opinions or photos of their stay on review sites such as TripAdvisor without the approval of the property."

"Please take this into consideration when researching your travel plans."

Photo



http://thechronicleherald.ca/sites/default/files/1k070707lodge13_171229_Provincial_09
Korine Schutter, a teacher from Midland, Mich., in the lounge area at Trout Point Lodge. The lodge requires visitors to sign a promise not to write web reviews. (Tim Krochak / Staff)

Positive reviews of Trout Point Lodge outnumber negative comments by a huge majority on TripAdvisor.

However, Leary said the site is regularly filled with fake reviews and libellous commentary about his business and others. He said he can accept that not all reviews from guests will be positive.

Leary said customers are accepting the request to sign the non-posting agreement, and he is keen to see other operators institute a similar policy.

"As far as I can tell, we are the first business to implement such an agreement. It seems to be the only way to stand up to TripAdvisor, which thrives off free content and advertising and inaccurately promotes itself as a source of unbiased and objective reviews."

Leary said the signed agreement from guests gives the lodge a legal mechanism to challenge inaccurate or libellous comments that appear on the TripAdvisor site and also protect the privacy of guests who might not want to see themselves appear in a YouTube video.

(bpower@herald.ca (mailto:bpower@herald.ca))

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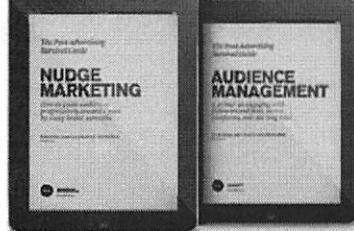
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